



Grey County WOODLOT

Association ...ON THE LEADING EDGE

A CHAPTER OF THE ONTARIO WOODLOT ASSOCIATION

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CHAIR'S CORNER

The value in GCWA membership is delivered primarily through two of our Committees; Programs and Communications, chaired respectively by directors Carl Sadler and Malcolm Silver. Program events include tours, workshops, conferences and meetings and are both educational and social, providing members with hands-on learning and an opportunity to share woodlot experiences. On the Tree Identification Workshop at 'Old Baldy', reported elsewhere in this issue, I was reminded of how fortunate we are to have such valuable contribution from professionals from the Grey Sauble and Saugeen Conservation Authorities. These people have a wealth of knowledge about local forests and practices that they share with us willingly, and on their own time. If we had to hire such consulting services, our Association could not afford it.

Our communication with members is through printed material sent by direct mail and our web site www.gcwa.ca. The Newsletter has been a popular item over the years, with an educational component. Now, with our relationship with the Ontario Woodlot Association, we believe their S&W Report will provide more educational material, sourced more widely than we could manage previously. Nevertheless, we will continue with a mini version of our own Newsletter, geared more to GCWA news. It will be smaller, less costly to print and will be mailed along with other materials, rather than separately, as before. I express my thanks to Malcolm Silver and the members of his team for keeping us up to date.

The new dues structure as a Chapter of

OWA was mentioned briefly in a previous mailing, but perhaps some additional explanation will be helpful. In this new relationship, both revenue and expenses for GCWA will be lower. Previously, revenue from member fees was \$25, or on the basis of 150 members, \$3,750 per year. Now, revenue will be \$15 per member (as a rebate from OWA), or on the basis of 150 members, \$2250 per year, a difference of \$1500. On the other hand, our expenses will be reduced by about \$1000 because OWA will now administer the collection of dues and our mini Newsletter will cost less.

Dues for membership in OWA are now \$40 per year. The membership year is September 15 to September 14 of the following year. The GCWA paid the membership dues to OWA for the period from joining to September 15, 2009. Our members, therefore, will each be credited with \$8 on dues for the next membership year because the dues they paid to GCWA in 2009 were for the calendar year. In other words, OWA will invoice GCWA members for \$32 in September for membership for the 2009/2010 year.

If you know of potential new members you can inform them that OWA has a policy for new members who want to join part way into the calendar year. New members joining OWA after March 15 will be given an extended membership from then through the following membership year.

I would like to introduce two new directors who were elected at our last Annual General Meeting. Gordon Cooper, elected by

the Board as Vice President, owned and operated an equipment rental business in Toronto for 37 years. He now lives in West Grey, north and west of Priceville, on a property with 25 acres of hardwood and a 2 acre trout pond. The bush has had one major harvest and is managed for firewood production. Gordon and his wife Ruth have three children.

Bob DeJong, elected by the Board as Treasurer, has been a part time resident of Grey County for 25 years and now he and his wife Jane live full time on their property near Chatsworth. Most of his career has been in the investment business and he now says he is quasi retired. The property contains a 15 acre woodlot, with a wide diversity of species, mainly hardwood and a fair stand of hemlock. Bob and Jane have two sons, now living in the US.

Over the years we have held frequent tree identification hikes, but because the number of people turning up was declining we decided to extend the interval between these outings. The May 23 workshop held along the Bruce Trail at 'Old Baldy' was intended primarily for new members. I was pleased, therefore, to see a very large turnout for this event, including a group of our new members. To those new members - Welcome. To the regular members - Thanks for coming.

The Emerald Ash Borer is a serious threat to the forests of Grey County. The insect is spread primarily through the movement of infested wood. Now that we are into the summer camping season we need to be vigilant of how we handle firewood. Movement of wood from quarantined areas is prohibited. The insect is spreading beyond these areas however, and it is not easy to detect. The best practice for campers is to not transport any wood at all - buy your firewood at the camp site.

Woodlots are special. Manage them to meet your objectives and enjoy them - and have a great summer.

TREE IDENTIFICATION OUTING

Saturday May 23rd at 10:00 am I joined 30 others for the GCWA tree-identification session held at Old Baldy conservation area. The Grey-Sauble conservation authority under then director Mac Kirk enjoyed a buying spree in the early 1960's collecting many land parcels in both Grey & Bruce counties for woodlot or conservation purposes. One purchase included this magnificent limestone outcrop overlooking Beaver Valley's east side with surrounding property extending to the road at Kimberly village below. This area is to be left in its natural state and not subject to managed cropping. Part of the Bruce Trail winds through it while climbing its rock face is permitted with license; our son used to paraglide into the valley from its summit in his younger days. We were warned to bring proper clothing, footwear, and be prepared for rain or bugs. The showers that fell were so light we really didn't need rainwear but insect repellent certainly was required - black flies were numerous and in dealing with them some, encased in netting, were better prepared than others.

During the next 2 hours Carl Sadler walked us from the car park to the apex of Old Baldy, returning via the Mac Kirk trail

loop. The trail is used heavily so many tree roots were exposed along its course and one had to watch their footing. En route Carl identified native and alien trees by leaf and/or bark; he professed not to know much about shrubs - I only wish I had 1/2 the knowledge he demonstrated about them that day; and understory plants. He also defined tree diseases and answered many questions fired at him by eager participants. His expertise and long association with the area made this a most valuable educational and memorable outing and should not be missed.

This report does not cover the details of tree identification but comments on remarks made by Carl or were heard as



snippets from fellow attendees.

In areas the understory was ablaze, presenting a host of native spring flowers most obviously colonies of white, large-flowered, trilliums [Trillium grandiflorum](#) whose flowers becoming pink with age; we saw a few red trilliums ([T. erectus](#)). It's unwise to pick their flowers because the three leafy bracts below the bloom are the only site of food production for storage and a picked trillium can take years to recover. Trillium plants don't produce seeds for many years. The latter cannot survive exposure to full sunlight and are spread by [ants](#) and [mice](#). The seeds have a fleshy organ (an [elaiosome](#)) that attracts ants. They take the seeds to their nest, where they eat the elaiosomes and put the seeds aside; there they are protected until they [germinate](#) getting a bonus by growing in ant garbage. Multicolored native violets were also obvious with some jack-in-the-pulpits. Swathes of ramps or native leeks (of the [Allium](#) family) brought comments about eating them when attending school and being sent home in bad odor.

This delectable sight is threatened by an overgrowth of garlic mustard ([Alliaria petiolata](#)) seen elsewhere during the walk. The leaves of this alien biennial herb give-off a garlicky odor when crushed. First-year plants present a rosette of green leaves close to the ground; they remain green throughout the winter and develop into mature plants 1/2 to 1 m tall that have button-like clusters of small white flowers. Seeds are produced in erect, slender pods with a single plant producing hundreds,

which scatter several meters from a parent. Long distance dispersal is aided by humans and wildlife; indeed, Carl suspected the plants here had been introduced as seeds on the boots of hikers or tires of cyclists. Many native wildflowers that complete their life cycles in springtime occur in the same habitat as garlic mustard. Once introduced, this weed outcompetes them and wildlife that depends on them is deprived of the food they provide. The goal in control is to prevent seed production.



Hand removal is possible for light infestations and when desirable native species co-occur. You must remove a plant's entire root system because new ones sprout from root fragments. This is best achieved when the soil is moist, by grasping a plant low and firmly and tugging gently until the main root loosens and the entire plant pulls out. Recognition of garlic mustard is critical because several white-flowered native plants occur alongside it and may be mistaken for it. You will need professional advice to deal with heavy infestations.

Carl showed us the effects of several tree infestations/infections. First were eastern tent caterpillars (*Malacosoma americanum*), in this instance in apple trees although the insects also attack wild cherry, crabapple, hawthorn, maple, cherry, peach, pear or plum trees. Eggs that form caterpillars overwinter within a mass covered with a shiny, black varnish-like material that encircles pencil-sized or smaller branches. Caterpillars hatch about the time buds begin to open. The insects are social; caterpillars from one egg mass stay together and spin a silken tent in a crotch of a tree while those from two or more egg masses may unite to form one large colony. During the heat of the day or in rainy weather, caterpillars remain within the tent. They emerge to feed on leaves in the early morning, evening, or at night when not too cold. The hairy caterpillars are black with a white stripe down the back, brown and yellow lines along the sides and a row of oval blue spots on the sides. As they feed on foliage, they increase the size of the web until it may be 30 cm or more long. In 4 to 6 weeks caterpillars are full grown and 5 to 7 cm, they then wander from the nest individually to find protected areas where they cocoon. While tent caterpillars can

almost defoliate a tree when numerous, it usually recovers and sprouts a new crop of leaves. Carl indicated populations fluctuate

from year to year due to predators and a few diseases regulating their numbers, with outbreaks occurring every several years. Insecticides are generally ineffective against mature larvae although Carl said WD 40 (I presumed the oil rather than the beer) is effective. Prevention and early control are important. Removal and destruction of egg masses from ornamentals and fruit trees during winter greatly reduces the problem the following spring. In early spring, small tents can be removed and destroyed by hand. Larger tents may be pruned out and destroyed or removed by winding the nest upon a stick. Burning tents with a torch is not recommended since this can easily damage the tree.



Next was white pine blister rust affecting a tree in an adjacent unpruned plantation that Carl himself helped plant some 30 years earlier. This disease is caused by *Cronartium ribicola*, a fungus that requires two host plants to complete its life cycle; white pines and a *Ribes* species. Pine infection occurs in late summer or fall by spores from *Ribes* leaves. A germ tube from the spore enters needles through stomata and the fungus grows into branches where its established mycelium forms a blister rust canker that continues to develop and expand. Eventually the fungus can grow into the main stem from branch cankers located near the trunk. Occasionally the main stem of young trees is infected directly via needles attached to the stem and these trees are killed within a few years. As the disease progresses this swollen area becomes a spindle-shaped canker sometimes with a detectable difference in bark color at its margins. Determining the proximal margins of branch cankers is important if considering pruning to remove these branches. After 1 or 2 years the fungus produces spores from the canker. Eventually the canker will completely girdle the branch, kill it, and the distal needles become red to produce a blister rust flag. The bark around the margin of these cankers often has a distinct orange color. Sporulation by the fungus occurs at the margins of these cankers and there may be abundant notice

able white resin flow from them. These spores infect Ribes plants. When the canker girdles the bole, the portion the tree above dies and the foliage fades to yellow and finally red. Usually cankers are low enough that a tree is killed but on larger trees only the top of one or more large branches may be killed initially, leaving the lower crown unaffected. These trees may live many years although weakened ones are subject to attack by other pests such as bark beetles. No control is possible. Cankers on the branches at least 4 inches from the main stem (trunk) should be removed. This will prevent the canker from reaching the main stem and killing the tree. Most blister rust cankers in our area occur within 3 m of the ground so pruning plantations above that height removes a tree's needle-bearing surface, most vulnerable to infection. Where infection occurs in the upper crowns of large trees, pruning for control is impractical. If you recognize ribes plants near your white pines grub them out.



Sadly, butternut canker has already infected most trees within its range. It's caused by a fungus ([Sirococcus clavignenti-juglandacearum](#)). Carl demonstrated the ravages of the disease with some trees showing dead branches or a dying top; discolored bark which, in at this season had an inky black fluid oozing from cracks in the cankered bark (in summer they present as sooty patches usually with a whitish margin); young cankers which were elongated and sunken into the bark. Often these occur around leaf scars, buds or wounds and old cankers which had loose bark covering them and several layers of overgrown trunk tissue nearby. Remember, if you have healthy butternuts amidst those being ravaged these trees may have a genetic resistance and Barbara Boyson of the Forest Gene Conservation Authority (Barb, Boyson@mnr.gov.on.ca) would be pleased to hear about them. Butternut is closely related to black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), which is not susceptible to the disease.

Eutypella or cobra head canker, caused by the fungus [Eutypella parasitica](#), affected some maples; all maples are susceptible if sugar maple more so than others. It attacks saplings or small sawtimber-sized trees, and usually affects only scattered trees within a stand. The first symptom is callus formation around an infection point, usually a branch stub or wound. A sunken, dead area develops in the center of the callus and

expands as the fungus grows outward. Broad, slightly raised areas of callus tissue may cause a wave-like appearance on the canker face. In later years the cankered area may form a hump, as the tree responds to the invasion, the final appearance resembling of a cobra's expanded hood. Dry, flinty bark remains attached to the face of the canker for many years and can be a site of entry of rot fungi. The affected tree is unsuitable for timber and is subject to wind breakage.

The view across Beaver Valley from Old Baldy's summit is spectacular at any season and even on this overcast day. Geologically this U shaped dry reentrant valley was produced by past glacial ice moving from low to higher ground but unlike Colpoys or Hope Bay formed in a similar manner it was not flooded subsequently. Carl indicated that in the fall turkey vultures stage in the valley before migrating south and at that time each post surrounding the sewage lagoon at Talisman may have a bird sitting upon it. Some of the cedars living on the limestone in the vicinity are hundreds of years old, many had foliage cleared a certain distance up their bole due to deer standing on hind legs and pasturing on them during winter. Some woodpecker holes in a large dead one were differentiated into those used for feeding, nesting (round) or roosting with the latter having a hole both above and below to allow



the bird easy escape if need be.

The accompanying photographs were taken either by Klaas Vanderbelt or Malcolm Silver. Carl Sadler is the guy with grey cap & dark glasses pointing to things; for others you must know who you are!